

Creating a frog pond... it's fun and easy!

This [Junior Landcare](#) guide is designed to provide teachers and students with an understanding of how to make a native habitat pond or frog bog, be involved in school grounds improvement and conserve biodiversity.

The guide has been developed by teachers in schools in response to an identified need and learning that is valued in the Australian Curriculum.

Gordonvale State School, a [Junior Landcare](#) Award winning school, is located 23 kilometres south of Cairns. Students, teachers, other school staff and the community have actively engaged in developing environmental sustainability policies and practices for the school. One project was building a frog pond! Check out their ideas or visit the school if you are in the area.

Steps for making a frog pond

(or any type of native habitat pond)

1. Investigate ponds in other schools especially safety management ideas that are used. Some schools install a metal grill under the water surface, while others locate the ponds in a well fenced off 'natural area'. Other ideas include making a very shallow frog bog or pond or placing it in a frequently used area where everyone can see what's going on.
2. Find out more about your local council's requirements before you plan to start. It would also help talking to your Department of Education office or nearby Catholic



Education office to find out more about any regulations they might have. Ask questions about the size, depth and location of school ground water features.

3. Explore the direction of water flows in the school, preferably after it has rained. The ideal location for the pond may be where runoff naturally accumulates. Another source of water to consider is water that could be used from the school's downpipes. Try to ensure that the pond site will not receive any excess nutrients from runoff.
4. Choose your location after asking questions like 'Who can live here?'. To attract any fauna, the location needs to ensure they can find or have access to:
 - a. Food
 - b. Water
 - c. Shelter
 - d. Nesting materials
 - e. Protection from predators
5. Design the pond remembering that an average depth of 30cm will be suitable for water creatures. Your design might feature sloping sides, a shoreline of various habitat coves or a gradually sloping beach. Consider whether to have an 'overflow' pond area too for excess rainwater.
6. Think about your construction options as many ponds use a commercially available liner, whilst others use concrete or a thick layer of compacted clay. Seek advice from a pond expert.



7. Get digging making sure the edges of the pond are level. Use a dumpy level or a simple water level – try a clear tube long enough to reach the extremities.
8. Use the soil to create mounds and undulations near the pond.
9. Line the dug out pond with sand, old carpet or hessian bags.
10. Lay the pond liner.
11. Check for any added chemicals in the local water supply before filling with water. Chlorine will dissipate within a week however other chemicals may require a neutraliser. For a healthy pond add a bucket of water from a nearby natural pond.
12. Fill the pond with water and place rocks and tree branches in the pond as habitat and climbing places for wild life.
13. Select appropriate indigenous aquatic plants. Some might float while others might grow tall out of the water. Plant dense native grasses and shrubs along the edge for hiding spaces and a food supply. Get more plant suggestions from your local nursery or council.
14. Create a boundary around the pond with a low fence, log seating or large rocks. Talk about 'How to be safe around the pond' and publicise safety precautions with signage nearby.

Have fun!



Australian Curriculum Links

Year 5 and 6 Design and Technologies

Strand: Design and Technologies knowledge and understanding

Investigate how people in design and technologies occupations address competing considerations, including sustainability in the design of products, services and environments for current and future use [ACTDEK019](#)

Year 5 and 6 Health and Physical Education

Strand: Personal, Social and Community Health: Being healthy, safe and active

Plan and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing [ACPPS054](#)

Year 6 Science

Strand: Biological sciences

The growth and survival of living things are affected by the physical conditions of their environment [ACSSU094](#)

Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), downloaded from the Australian Curriculum website on August 2 014. This Junior Landcare guide has been developed to support the Australian Curriculum. For further details, please visit www.australiancurriculum.edu.au

Cross Curriculum Priority: Sustainability

- OI:2 All life forms, including human life, are connected through ecosystems on which they depend for their wellbeing and survival.
- OI:3 Sustainable patterns of living rely on the interdependence of healthy social, economic and ecological systems.
- OI:5 World views are formed by experiences at personal, local, national and global levels, and are linked to individual and community actions for sustainability.
- OI:7 Actions for a more sustainable future reflect values of care, respect and responsibility, and require us to explore and understand environments.
- OI:9 Sustainable futures result from actions designed to preserve and/or restore the quality and uniqueness of environments.